

Inflatable Pools Can Be Great Fun If Used Safely

As midsummer temperatures soar and kids become restless, an inflatable swimming pool might seem like a cheap, simple solution to provide fun and needed relief from the scorching heat. Some super-sized pools are over 3 feet deep and still very affordable, but some are big enough that many cities in Kansas even require permits and fencing.

While providing fun, inexpensive relief from the heat, inflatable pools have hidden dangers that parents need to know about. Younger children, especially toddlers, can drown even in shallow wading pools. Kids should never be left unattended around any type of pool, according to Jan Stegelman, Safe Kids Kansas Coordinator.

“Kiddie pools are just as dangerous to a small child as full-size pools — a child can drown in just a few inches of water,” says Stegelman. “Make sure that you store the pool upside down when not in use so that it cannot fill with rainwater.”

The Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that 17 persons died in the United States from drowning in inflatable pools in 2005, up from nine in 2004. Annually, around 280 children under age 5 drown and another 2,100 are treated in emergency rooms for immersion-related injuries, mostly caused by home pools.

The CPSC, American Red Cross and Safe Kids Kansas recommend the following inflatable pool safety precautions:

- Check local code departments for permit and installation requirements.
- Make sure children in and around pool are supervised at all times.
- Remove toys from pool when not in use to avoid tempting children.
- Require non-swimmers or weak swimmers to wear lifejackets or floatation devices.
- Consider emptying pool when not in use.
- If a child is missing, always look in the pool first.
- Keep emergency equipment near the pool.

Inflatable pools have become an affordable way to provide hours of cool fun during hot summer days. Just be sure to take the proper precautions to ensure it doesn't become the source of a summer-time tragedy.



Danger lurks in even shallow water pool with young children. Safe Kids Kansas says children should never be left unattended around any type of pool.